

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH):

(a) and (b) In recognition of the genuine need of some passport applicants for out of turn issue of passports, the Tatkaal Scheme has been implemented with effect from 1.1.2000. The Tatkaal Scheme is applicable only in cases of genuine urgency where either police verification is not required or where a passport can be issued on post police verification basis alongwith the submission of a verification certificate issued by an officer of the rank of Deputy Secretary and above to Government of India. Passports under this Scheme are issued on payment of an additional fee of Rs. 1500/- for a passport to be issued within ten days of receipt of application and Rs. 1000/- for a passport to be issued between 11 and 35 days of the receipt of application.

(c) to (e) It is the Government's endeavour to issue passports on payment of normal passport fee in 56 weeks provided a clear Police Verification Report has been received and the application is complete in all other respects and no-out of turn service is to be provided.

Foreign visits to get support on cross border terrorism

1260. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the countries visited by him and the Prime Minister during September-November, 2001 to get support/understanding on issue of cross border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir by the Pakistan supported terrorists; and

(b) the outcome of the discussion held with the leaders of those countries and their views in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH):

(a) and (b) As part of Government's ongoing efforts to promote India's interests in the international community, Prime Minister and External Affairs Minister have undertaken several visits abroad during the months of September-November. These visits included visits to Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Russia and the United States. While the visits were used to promote India's bilateral relations with these countries, in view of the developments following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, Pakistan's sponsorship of cross border terrorism in India figured prominently during these talks.

During the Prime Minister's visit to the Russian Federation both sides signed the Moscow Declaration on International Terrorism, on 6th November

2001, reaffirming that global terrorism is a threat to international peace and security and that co-operation to combat terrorism is becoming an imperative of contemporary reality. Both sides reiterated the view that combating terrorism must be on a comprehensive and long term basis and should be directed also at those supporting, harbouring and providing safe haven to terrorists. After Prime Minister's meeting with the US President, a Joint Statement was issued on 9th November 2001, at Washington D.C. In the statement both countries affirmed the need for a global war against terrorism and its sponsors everywhere in the world, and reiterated that there can be no justification for terrorism, which must be eradicated wherever it exists.

On India-Pakistan relations Prime Minister and EAM conveyed that while India is committed to establishing good neighbourly ties with Pakistan, it cannot be expected to ignore its vital security concerns. Pakistan must halt its sponsorship of cross border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India. Government also conveyed that India was firmly resolved, and had the ability and stamina to resist terrorism until it is decisively crushed.

Discussion with US President about ethnic cleansing in Bangladesh

1261. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the matter relating to ethnic cleansing in Bangladesh, which has resulted millions of Bangladeshi minorities homeless since new Government rose to power in Dhaka was taken up with the President of USA during his recent visit in USA;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the President of USA thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH):

(a) No, sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Safety arrangement for nuclear facilities

1262. SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in 'The Statesman' Delhi edition, dated the 2nd November,